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The Common Cause

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[The N.U.W.S.S. does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed in signed articles or in correspondence.

All MSS. and letters relating thereto should be addressed to the Editor, THE COMMON CAUSE, *Evelyn House, 62, Oxford Street, W. 1. Telephone: Museum 2702.]*

Notes and News.

The Register.

Women Voters should now look for their names on the Register Lists, which are open for inspection at post-offices, &c., until July 8th. The last day for making claims is July 17th.

Maternity and Child Welfare Bill.

This Bill passed its second reading on June 24th. It was introduced by Mr. Hayes Fisher (President of the Local Government Board), and opposed by a group of members, including Major Astor and Major J. W. Hills, on the ground that it makes but a small advance, and is likely to prevent, or delay, the introduction of the much-needed measure for a Ministry of Health. It is true that Mr. Walsh promised, on behalf of the L.G.B., that it would not be so used; but the Board has not a good record in the matter, and we cannot understand why the larger measure, that everyone wants, is not ready now. Had Lord Rhondda remained at the L.G.B., we should have had it now, instead of this makeshift, and though we owe him our food, we could wish he had not had to leave that task unfinished. If this "little Bill" is used to obstruct the larger one, it will be a serious national misfortune, but we trust that the Women's Co-operative Guild are right in their hope that this will lead to an immediate improvement of the condition of life for our babies. In itself it is not much of a Bill. It is permissive in character, and everyone knows that permissive legislation in matters of this kind is usually only effective in districts which are already satisfactory. It contains provisions, also, as to the composition of local committees which we hope to see improved in Committee, if the Bill ever gets beyond the Second Reading stage. As at present defined, it will be difficult for a local authority, with the best will in the world, to put more than one or two women upon the local committees set up to deal with maternity; and, as we know, the best will in the world is all too rare in local authorities when it comes to putting women into positions of local responsibility. We earnestly trust that if this Bill is to survive, it may, before it leaves the House, be itself substantially improved. Perhaps it is true that this Bill, as it stands, cannot be an administrative success. Be this as it may, it cannot be regarded as a permanent solution of what is, after all, the central problem of reconstruction. New wine in new bottles is the thing to work for.

The Harvest.

The Prime Minister has addressed to the women of Great Britain an eloquent appeal to come forward quickly for harvest work. The appeal, we think, is intended primarily for the women who live in the country, for it is by them that the greatest help can now be given. They can, without disturbing housing or transit conditions, lend their strength to their country to safeguard its winter food. They can supplement and extend the work of regular labourers, and it is to them that this summer offers an immediate opportunity. Regular land workers are still, and always, wanted, and training is constantly available; but the need at this moment is more especially for the real country women, to whose goodwill we feel sure the nation will not look in vain. Information as to immediate land work can be obtained from all Employment Exchanges, or from the Board of Agriculture (Women's Section), or their recruiting office at 135, Victoria Street.

Women Workers' Procession.

On Saturday, June 29th, Londoners had the privilege of witnessing the sight of 3,000 representative women in the multifarious uniforms of their work, marching together to present to the King and Queen the message of their loyalty. The procession was striking in many ways, and gave picturesque and unmistakable evidence of the new footing of women throughout the country. Who would have thought, in 1914, that groups of women shipbuilders in the blue overalls and trousers of their work, would march through the streets of London—to be greeted with cheers, and not with laughter? Who could have pictured the white-smocked agricultural labourers, with their gaiters and their green caps, or the ranks upon ranks of munition workers, with the flaming scarlet of their tool-setters, and the heavy gloves of the workers in acids? And who would have expected the white-clad electricians, with their trousers and their tunics, or the stiff, blue policewomen, who came marching in the rear? The W.A.A.C.s were there, with their khaki coats, and the W.R.N.S., with their sailor collars and neat, blue uniforms; and so were the timber girls and the forage girls, the postwomen, the railway women, and the gas labourers. The land girls came from every county, and the munition workers from every process; while among them the nurses, the cooks, the orderlies, and the doctors from our great hospitals, took their proper share. Rank after rank filed past, marching well together, and no one who saw them go could fail to be proud of "the women."

Woman Power.

For all the beauty of the procession, and for all the eloquence of the appeals, however, we feel that there is still something wrong with the Woman-Power question. We are not satisfied either with the recruiting, or with the status, or with the control of the various women's corps. Why, after all, should not women enlist in the Army of their country? Why should they not be under Courts Martial, and commissioned officers of their own? We are convinced that there is a magnificent and unused strength of service and of ability among the women of the country, and that the bad old system which prevails still, even in our newest departments, of putting women under the control of men is responsible for much waste. Surely, at this time of day, we need to use our best people in the best places—and whether the best person is a man or a woman matters nothing at all. Why, we repeat, is Woman Power still and always a question of auxiliary and subordinate power? Why are women praised and fêted but not trusted?

The Labour Party Conference.

The first Conference of the Labour Party under its new constitution was held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on June 26th, 27th, and 28th. The agenda dealt with the breaking of the party truce and with the problems of reconstruction; but the outstanding event of the Conference was the dramatic and unexpected appearance of M. Kerenski on the afternoon of the first day, and his subsequent speech to the assembled delegates and to the whole world. In the turmoil of national and international disintegration which accompanies this world-war, and amid the tentative theories of reconstruction which alone are yet possible, the sight of Russia's struggle and Russia's fate stands, as Kerenski said, a challenge to all the democratic forces of the world. Above all our own problems, and beyond even the pressing menace of the war, so forcibly brought before the Conference by the French and Belgian delegates, there hovers the ideal of that democratic liberty for which the Labour Party itself stands, and for which the Allied nations are fighting; and it was the thought of this that the strange Russian brought with him when he came, with the memory of all its difficulties and obscurities.

The effect of his coming upon the Conference was strange in the extreme. The question of the partial severance of the Party Truce, which had been rousing heated controversy, died away almost into insignificance. The running of candidates, the prevention of unemployment, and the controlling of Employment Exchanges passed out of the centre of interest, and even the great questions of fundamental social reconstruction which the Executive brought before the Conference roused little but hasty assent. So, too, did the questions concerning the complete emancipation of women, though we note them with great satisfaction. They were carried without opposition, and run as follows :—

That the Conference holds that the changes in the position of women during the war, in which they have rendered such good service, and the importance of securing to women as to men the fullest possible opportunities for individual development, make it necessary to pay special attention in the reconstruction programme to matters affecting women; and, in particular, the Conference affirms—

A.—With Regard to Industry on Demobilisation :—

(i.) That work or maintenance at fair rates should be provided for all women displaced from their employment to make way for men returning from service with the forces or other national work.

(ii.) That full inquiry should be made into trades and processes previously held to be unhealthy or in any way unsuitable for women, but now being carried on by them, with a view to making recommendations as to the conditions of their further employment in such trades.

(iii.) That all women employed in trades formerly closed to them should only continue to be so employed at Trade Union rates of wages.

(iv.) That Trade Unions should be urged to accept women members in all trades in which they are employed.

(v.) That the principle of " equal pay for equal work " should be everywhere adopted.

B.—With Regard to Civic Rights :—

(i.) That all legal restrictions on the entry of women to the professions on the same conditions as men should be abrogated.

(ii.) That women should have all franchises, and be eligible for election to all public bodies (including Parliament), on the same conditions as men.

(iii.) That systematic provision should be made for the inclusion of women in Committees or Commissions, national or local, dealing with any subjects that are not of exclusively masculine interest.

(iv.) That the present unjust provision of the income tax law, under which the married woman is not treated as an independent human being, even in respect of her own property or earnings, must be at once repealed.

Under the new constitution four places on the Executive Committee are reserved for women. There were eight candidates, of whom the following were elected : Dr. Ethel Bentham, Mrs. Harrison Bell, Mrs. Philip Snowden, and Miss Susan Lawrence.

Prophecies.

In those days, which already seem so far away, before women had votes, there were many prophets. Our enemies were prophets; they told us of the dread results that would follow the enfranchisement of women. And we were prophets, too: we spoke of the blessings to our country which would flow from an enfranchised womanhood. We may well look back on the five months that have passed since the vote was won, and ask if we can yet judge which of those prophecies were true and which were false.

" How do you know that when women get the vote they will be content to stop there, and not get into Parliament? " so the familiar question ran. We used to say, meekly, that we did not know, and that we must leave it to the constituencies to decide if they wanted a woman to represent them or not. But perhaps no one foresaw with what startling rapidity a woman would actually be adopted by a constituency, and the whole question become one of burning practical importance. The woman candidate for Parliament already seems an obvious thing; we instinctively feel that a woman in Parliament will be equally natural, just as a woman in the pulpit to-day, holding crowded congregations Sunday after Sunday, seems so much part of the scheme of things that we cannot realise how it would have outraged the public sense of propriety only a few years ago.

" What is there to prevent women voting all one way, and so swamping the male vote? " What indeed, except " her infinite variety," which seems to have become more " infinite " than ever since she has had the power of giving expression to it! The prophecy that women would outnumber men has already been fulfilled in some Local Government lists of voters that have been completed, but it has lost its terror in face of the diversity which is shown among the newly enfranchised women. Yet was there, then, no truth in our prophecy that the result of enfranchising a new body of citizens was always a new emphasis on the things for which the new voters particularly cared? Surely the prominence given to questions of public health and infant welfare, the interest aroused in such new and arresting problems as the endowment of childhood and motherhood, the much greater freedom, and honesty, and courage, with which moral questions are being brought into the open and faced, are all a fulfilment of the prophecy that women's suffrage would give a new emphasis to the questions that concern the care and well-being of the race.

" Is there not a fear that women's suffrage will greatly increase the ignorant vote? " was a hardy annual, especially among the cautious and conservatively minded. We look around, and everywhere we read of newly-formed Women's Citizens' Associations setting forth to educate and interest the new woman voter in the political questions of the day. The main point at issue appears to be, not to get such Associations formed, but to prevent those formed under different auspices from overlapping each other. When, we ask, have men, either as new or as old voters, thus formed themselves into Associations—quite apart from the political parties—merely with a view to helping themselves, and each other, to be better and more intelligent citizens? And with the prophecy that the ignorant vote would be increased went the fear lest women's suffrage would mean a general weakening in the moral fibre and strength of the nation. We rub our eyes to-day when we recall such a suggestion. It could only have been made before the war by those whose outlook on English life was strictly limited, but how false it sounds to-day, when we see the womanhood of the country answering to the calls made upon it with such entire adaptability and self-surrender. That charge can never be made again by a member of the nation which saw what British women could do in the years that followed August, 1914.

" Women will be unsexed if they enter the rough field of politics," said some. They have entered the rough fields of war work, and even of war, since those words were uttered, and the field of politics seems mild in comparison. " Unsexed," indeed, they are, if doing men's work and wearing men's clothes is an unsexing process, but if woman's sphere is where she can make the best use of all the faculties—mental and physical—which nature has given to her, then many women have to-day for the first time found their true place.

We on our part prophesied much which we felt instinctively was bound to happen, but perhaps even the most ardent of us hardly realised how quickly it would happen. We foretold the better relations between the sexes, the breaking down of the remaining barriers which restricted women's freedom, the

strengthening and bracing of women themselves, which would follow the removal of injustice, the higher wages which women's improved status in the community would bring. Though we cannot completely disentangle what is due to our enfranchisement and what to the changed conditions of war-time, yet we have seen all these things happen in the five short months that have followed the passing of the Reform Act: no barrier in women's way now seems to have very much stability, and no very bold prophet is needed to foretell the woman barrister, the woman solicitor, and the woman magistrate. But if the war has hastened the fulfilment of some prophecies it has delayed others, and we await the conclusion of the municipal party truce to enable us to secure a proper force of women councillors and women aldermen.

We used to silence the gloomy forebodings of our opponents by telling them that they must not be afraid of doing an act of justice for fear that harm should come of it. Do the right and fair thing, we said, and trust the consequences. We are confirmed in that faith to-day

The Trade Board Bill.

The new Trade Board Bill, so eagerly expected and so long deferred, has now successfully passed its second reading.

The tone and method of the debate were curious. It was admitted on all sides that the Trade Board Act of 1909 had been a great success. No word was said against the principle of a legal minimum wage applied to each industry on the advice on those concerned. The line of argument was rather that it would be far better to leave alone something which had worked well. There was also an attempt to show that the establishment of fresh Trade Boards was inconsistent with the proposals of the Whitley report—an attempt crushed almost as soon as made by that rare event in the House of Commons, a speech from the Deputy-Speaker, Mr. Whitley himself.

The Bill, indeed, contains nothing sensational and nothing very new. It consists of a series of amendments to the Act of 1909—amendments either designed slightly to increase the powers of the boards or to facilitate the establishment of fresh boards. It is, in short, merely an improvement in machinery.

It is not for that less important.

In truth it may be said that upon this simple little measure depends the future of the great mass of women engaged in industry.

The Trade Board Act of 1909 was in many respects an admirable measure. It has been applied, in all, to eight trades, employing about 300,000 women workers. It has, with the general approval of all concerned, rescued a great body of women from the extreme of poverty, and secured to them a living wage.

It has, however, its defects. At the time it was introduced, such legislation was considered in the light of an experiment, and was hedged about with a number of restrictions, which have the effect of making both the establishment of a new Trade Board and the working of the board when established lengthy and complicated processes. Before any large or general extension of legally protected minimum wages can be secured, a simpler and more speedy method is necessary. Under the old Act a Trade Board could only be established where wages were exceptionally low, and each board was established by a provisional order, for which the subsequent sanction by Parliament was necessary. The new Bill merely requires the Minister to have regard to the condition of wages in any trade, and substitute for the provisional order a special order, which after lying for a certain interval "on the table of the House" automatically passes into law.

The gain here is very great. Parliament has many matters to attend to—Parliamentary time is very precious. At the end of a session minor and opposed bills have very little chance. Twice already, in pre-war days, proposals to extend the Trade Board Act to the laundry trade were defeated before a Select Committee of the House. And it is clear enough that, when the war is over, Parliament will be overwhelmingly occupied with matters of first-class importance. If we need a new Act of Parliament for every new Trade Board, we may be certain that the list of protected trades will be a very modest one.

Now, if the position of women wage-earners is to be improved, a very considerable number of new boards must be established, and established in time to get to work as soon as peace is restored to us. The critical moments will be at the cessation of hostilities. For many reasons it will then be far easier to deal with wage problems than at a later date.

During the war a very considerable improvement in wages has taken place in many trades. This improvement is partly the result of agreements arranged by various unions, but mainly by the action of a group of trade unions in obtaining wages orders from the Ministry of Munitions, and in making full use of the right to arbitration conferred by the Munitions Act.

These orders have affected whole groups of women's work—light metal work, electric accessories, fuses, cartridges, rope, rubber, soap, chemicals; while workers in other industries such as boring and tents have profited by recourse to arbitration.

Some of the most poorly-paid trades have now for the first time attained a subsistence level. For instance, in London, the minimum wages in a high-class filling factory were 3d. an hour before the war, with a halfpenny for danger money; in a large cartridge factory, the minimum day rate was 3d., and in a firm manufacturing electric accessories 3d. and even 2½d.; these were all not small or non-typical firms, but firms of the first standing, where wages were by no means below the average. In all these at present the minimum wage is 5½d. an hour, plus a weekly bonus of 6s., with an extra halfpenny for danger money. Very much more startling instances could be given. For instance, in a large provincial cable firm, the wages—during the war—were fixed by arbitration at a rate of 2¾d. after a year's probation; and disgraceful as these rates were they were yet considerably in advance of the previous state of affairs. The firm in question now is compelled to pay the rates previously mentioned of 5½d. an hour plus 6s. a week.

At the end of the war these wages orders will cease to be obligatory; and it appears only too probable that wages will revert to their old level.

An actual instance showing this change may be given. A certain firm engaged on mine mechanism held a meeting of their workers in January of this year, and obtained their written consent to a scale of wages for adult women, commencing at 15s. for a week of fifty-three hours, and this although arbitration proceedings were actually pending. The result of the arbitration was that wages were advanced to 5½d. an hour, plus a weekly bonus of half-a-crown. Such an attempt by an isolated firm, under present conditions, has no practical importance, but if even a limited number of firms in the present protected trades took such action later on, the better firms, however unwillingly, would be compelled to follow suit.

The women's trade unions have made great progress recently; but it is unfortunately true that the majority of women are still unorganised. Without any legal minimum, and under the circumstances of disorganisation and unemployment which must accompany the re-settlement of industry, wages in the worst paid industry must almost inevitably revert to their former standard.

Some easily working and expeditious machinery is needed. The new Bill provides this machinery. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to women that the remaining stages of the Bill should be furthered, and that it should emerge substantially unchanged from Committee.

A. S. LAWRENCE.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN JEWISH PALESTINE.

There will be no need for "Votes-for-Women" campaigns in the new Jewish State that is to be established in Palestine. Equal suffrage is being accepted as a matter of course by the pioneers, who are engaged in the task of reorganising Jewish communal life.

When a Jewish Administrative Commission was on its way to take over the government of Jerusalem, Jaffa, and the Jewish colonies, all the elements interested called conferences to facilitate the work of the Commission. Equal suffrage was adopted by the Jewish community of Jaffa and a number of colonies, and the women participated in all the proceedings of these conferences.

Before the outbreak of the war, equal suffrage had gained a strong foothold in Palestine; indeed, it prevailed from the very beginning of the present Jewish colonisation, during the 'eighties, owing to the fact that so many Jewish women had become "persons of property." The real difficulty was to persuade the women to avail themselves of the right to vote.

It is noteworthy that equal suffrage is characteristic of the Zionist organisations throughout the world. Women are so prominently identified with the movement that their right to vote at the International Congresses and at the National Conventions is taken as a matter of course.

The Political Position of Indian Women.

By Mrs. Henry Fawcett.

It will be remembered that on August 20th, 1917, Mr. Montagu, Secretary of State for India, gave a pledge in the House of Commons on behalf of the Government that their policy was that of "increasing the association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India, as an integral part of the British Empire." Mr. Montagu also stated that the Government of India was in complete accord with these projected changes, and it is well known that he has only lately returned from a visit of several months in India, during which he was in constant communication with the Viceroy and other members of the Government and with representatives of nearly all schools of thought, official and unofficial, in India.

Possibly before this number of The Common Cause reaches our readers Mr. Montagu may have published details of the scheme for the gradual adoption of responsible government in India, which will be submitted to the vote of the both Houses of Parliament.

Suffragists in this country will be asking themselves and each other, "What does the Government propose to do about the representation of women in India?" Moreover, this question is also being asked by Indian women.

During the last two months I have received letters from groups of Indian women on this matter. One is from the All India Women's Deputation to Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu; another is from the secretary of the Women's Indian Association of Adyar, Madras. The first lays special stress on the need for education, but also emphasises the desire of the women of India to share in political responsibility. The signatories pray, just as we were praying only a few months ago, that women should be recognised as "people," and that the new measure of enfranchisement, whatever its terms, should be worded in such a way as not to disqualify an entire sex. The other puts a stronger emphasis on the need for political emancipation. It is so interesting that I transcribe its most important paragraph:—

"At present in many ways the position of women in this country is not satisfactory, even taking into consideration the difference between East and West. No wise person wishes to Europeanise Indian women, but for their welfare and development along the lines of Indian culture and education, it is necessary that their rights should be recognised by Indian men at the beginning of any new scheme. Indian women have already begun the big fight for education, marriage reform, etc.; and I can assure women in England that they are as capable, as intelligent, as keen to help and co-operate in any work for the welfare of humanity as any other women in the world, and, added to that, they have a spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion exceeding that of any other inhabitants of earth. I have considerable opportunity of knowing and understanding what the women in all parts of India are feeling and thinking, as I travel about with my husband, lecturing, and at every place we visit I hold women's meetings and get into touch with the women of the town or village. Also I am hon. organising secretary of the above Association, which has branches all over India and a large membership; and there is everywhere a most strong desire for education, to be allowed to take their place in the life of the country—a knowledge that they, as women, could contribute to the welfare of the nation were they given the opportunity. I might mention that the men in this country have very little knowledge of what the women think or feel about things, as it is not the custom of the two sexes to talk to each other, and interchange of ideas, even between near relations, is rare."

The writers of both these letters say that they have addressed those of their fellow-countrymen who are accounted the leaders of the political movement in India, representatives of the Indian National Congress, and the Home Rule League, but have failed to secure their sympathy or co-operation; they send evasive answers, and again we recognise our own position of a few years ago when it was judged that to include women in a Reform Bill would "overweight the ship," and consequently the women were thrown overboard. The levellers who are only willing to level down to themselves are a hardy breed, and the Indian variety bears a close resemblance to the anti-suffrage Liberals who were our worst enemies during many a crisis in our struggle in the last century.

The Executive Committee of the N.U.W.S.S. feel the liveliest sympathy with these Indian women who are putting the case for women's suffrage in India with so much moderation and power. And with a view to helping them, the officers of the N.U. have been authorised to sign, on behalf of the Executive, the letter to the Imperial Conference which will be found in another column. In the meantime, much encouragement will be felt in consequence of a powerful plea for the political emancipation of women which is embodied in a book called "India in Transition," by his Highness the Aga Khan, the head of the Ismaili Mahommedans, and an acknowledged leader in the Mahommedan world. A chapter of this book on the Status of Women in India puts the case for the inclusion of women on equal terms with men with a power and knowledge which no Western writer could equal. With all his knowledge of India, he demands that any measure of enfranchisement granted to men should be extended to the other sex, and he adds, "No scheme of political reform based on the co-operation of the people with their rulers can or will succeed if it is vitiated by the radical defect of closing the door to women on the irrational ground of sex and not accepting equal qualification as conferring equal rights" (p. 262). In another passage he speaks of the grave evils of infant marriage in India and of the immense difficulty and labour involved on the part of the late Mr. Malabari in getting the age of consent raised from ten to twelve, and he adds, "these and other social evils have so handicapped India that it is impossible to conceive of her taking a proper place in the midst of free nations unless the broad principle of equality between the sexes has been generally accepted by her people," p. 256. It is therefore on national, and not merely on feminist grounds, that His Highness bases his demand for giving women from the first their place in the electorates which may be formed in India.

The following letter has been sent to the members of the Imperial Conference on behalf of the N.U.W.S.S:—

Gentlemen,—We the officers of the N.U.W.S.S., representing a large number of Societies spread over Great Britain, beg respectfully to approach the Imperial War Conference and to place before them our earnest conviction that in view of probable steps being taken in the near future towards the Federation of the Empire, those countries within the Empire with free representative institutions which have not already adopted the principle of Women's Suffrage should be urged to do so without delay.

We press for this because (1) women everywhere form half the race, and that to leave them in a position of political subjection is contrary to the whole spirit of free institutions on which the strength of Britain is founded.

Also (2) that until women receive the training, education and discipline which responsibility for national well-being alone can give, they fail, and necessarily fail, to contribute their full share to the development of all that is best morally, politically and economically in the countries to which they severally belong.

We venture to urge that this principle, *i.e.*, the share of women in national and political life and their special responsibility for certain aspects of it, should be recognised in India, whatever may be the form which the practical carrying out of the pledges given by H.M.'s Government on August 20th, 1917, may take. It is unnecessary to dwell on the capacity of Indian women. From time immemorial the names of certain Indian Princesses stand out among the ablest and most sagacious of the rulers of their respective provinces. The changes of the last 50 years have opened University education to women, and there are now considerable numbers of Indian ladies who have availed themselves of it, who practise medicine, lecture on law, and conduct schools with skill and success second to none in Western countries. To leave such women out of "the progressive realisation of responsible government in India," to which H.M.'s Government are pledged, would be an omission which could only produce in an ever-increasing number of able women a sense of grievance leading to unrest and discontent. We have lately received communications from groups of such women in this sense. Our convictions on the subject are strengthened by the fact that many of the practical problems which call for Government action in India are concerned with education, marriage and the family, subjects on which women in all countries have special knowledge and responsibility. Therefore, to leave them entirely out of the electorates which may probably be formed in fulfilment of the pledges of the Government would be a national disaster which would go far to nullify the benefits which might otherwise be expected from the projected reforms.

We are aware that the subject on which we write is surrounded by peculiar difficulties in India, but we are convinced that serious dangers will also arise from doing nothing, and we believe that the presence of His Highness the Maharajah of Patiala and Sir Satyendra Sinha gives an invaluable opportunity for utilising their knowledge of India for introducing the principle of the representation of women in such a way as would commend itself to the most enlightened public opinion of their country.—We have the honour to remain,

Millicent Garrett Fawcett (Pres.). Margaret Jones (Hon. Sec.).
Alys Russell (Treasurer). Ray Strachey (Hon. Parl. Sec.).

THE CENTRAL INFORMATION BUREAU OF THE N.U.W.S.S.

The Central Information Bureau exists in order to give assistance to the woman citizen—whether in her individual capacity or as a member of a society or association and to provide information on all subjects connected with the political, social and economic interests of women and girls. It aims at becoming the recognised source of information on these matters, and guaranteeing that the answers it gives to enquiries are as full, as accurate, and as up to date as possible.

It does not wish to poach on the preserve of the expert or of the specialist society but to co-operate with and to get information from such specialists, and to forward the knowledge so obtained to its own enquirers in the form most convenient to them.

In the case of matters quite outside its scope, it will refer the applicant to the proper sources of information.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTRAL INFORMATION BUREAU.

1. *The Collection of Information—Its Filing and Indexing.*

Only a visit to the Headquarters of the Bureau can give to the possible enquirer any idea of the vast amount of information already acquired by the Bureau, and this is in process of being supplemented daily. If the information already to hand on a given subject is in any way inadequate, a special enquiry is undertaken by the Staff of the Bureau.

2. *Distribution of Information.*

This is undertaken in response to enquiries either by correspondence, or by personal interview.

In addition, a bulletin on matters of current interest, and a quarterly bibliography on relevant books and pamphlets will be issued to individuals and Societies who wish to have them, and special articles are from time to time provided for THE COMMON CAUSE.

Information and advice is given on the legal position and existing rights, opportunities and liberties of women, but care is taken not to act as unprofessional legal adviser in cases that should be taken to a solicitor.

3. *Research into Special Problems.*

This is undertaken either on the initiative of the Bureau itself, or at the request of outside Societies and individuals

The Bureau will make a special effort to co-operate with other bodies for this branch of its work.

4. *The Establishment of a Lending and of a Reference Library.*

These libraries are to be opened shortly.

The *Lending Library* will be open to societies and individuals, and will contain books, periodicals, and pamphlets on all subjects—political, social, economic, of interest to women—*e.g.*, on Citizenship, on Social Reform, on Government—Central, Local and International—on Housing, Education, &c., &c.

Boxes of books on selected subjects are to be prepared for Societies such as Suffrage Societies, Women Citizens' Associations, Women's Institutes, &c., anxious to study any special problem.

The financial arrangements are not yet completed, but it is hoped that the subscription will not exceed £1 1s. per annum for Societies, and 10s. 6d. for individuals. This, it is estimated, will cover the annual expenses, but it is most urgent that donations should be sent immediately to help establish as complete a library as possible. For the more expensive books this Library is to be attached to the Central Library for Students, which will supplement its stock of more expensive books (the Central Library itself only supplying books of more than 5s. in value, and not aiming at supplying individuals).

A *Reference Library* on feminist subjects is maintained at the Bureau for reference only. Small "libraries" of books, pamphlets, &c., suitable for different classes of readers are, it is hoped, to be on sale at prices varying from 2s. 6d. to 10s.

Local Information Bureaux.—The Central Information Bureau is ready to give information and advice on the starting of Local Information Bureaux, and to keep in touch with these once they are started. Local Information Bureaux can rely for everything but local information on the Central Information Bureau. The latter will keep the Local Bureaux in touch with the information it requires, and will expect them to let it have information on matters of interest concerning the locality.

Further details as to the starting of Local Information Bureaux can now be obtained from the Central Information Bureau. No fee is charged for answers to enquiries.

No charity is given nor employment found by the Central Information Bureau. Enquiries dealing with questions of employment should be addressed to the Women's Service Bureau, London Society for Women's Suffrage (58, Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1).

Information.

Never since the invention of printing have men lived so much by rumour and hearsay as they do in these days. "Have you heard?" "they say," and "Did you see in the papers?" are considered sufficient to warrant the introduction of any fable and to dub it fact. Vagueness is fast becoming a habit of men's minds. It is not surprising, seeing that for nearly four years it has been considered unpatriotic to want to know the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and now that propaganda has official licence to masquerade as information men cherish opinions the more violently because they are debarred from forming judgments. And yet the judicial frame of mind, the disposition to weigh both sides of a case, to take all facts into consideration, was never more urgently needed than to-day.

Emotionalism is human—all too human, but it is not helpful. We have had enough exhibitions of it from men to make us wonder if it is not perhaps after all their special province. Let us see to it that women, who are now going to be able to make their political opinions felt, base those opinions upon a knowledge of facts, and do not trust to prejudices founded on illusion.

It requires an effort, no doubt, to seek out information for oneself and to judge a question on its merits. But it requires an effort to learn to read. That is not an excuse for not doing so. As great a stigma ought to attach to the ill-informed woman as does to the illiterate woman. Nobody can be expected to have valuable judgments on every political subject, but at least everybody can know where her limitations come and how she could supplement them if she chose. A little knowledge is such a dangerous thing because it prevents people from seeing their limitations, but it does not prevent them from holding views on any and every subject.

There is nothing like minding one's own business, and in order not to be bewildered by the mass of "questions" that confront every citizen, women should begin by studying those that interest them most. They will find, of course, that these are legion, and finally that everything is connected with everything else, and other people's business *is* one's own. But politics, like charity, might do worse than begin at home. "When I sat down to think of what I wanted," says Mrs. Smith to Mrs. Jones (Women's Co-operative Guild's leaflet), "I hadn't any idea that I had political opinions. But now I find that after all I have lots of them. I have views on factory legislation—the hours, and there's lots of other points, too, inside the factory, if you begin to think what you'd like altered—views on housing—about my stairs, and the water and the garden—views on education, and on what they call economic questions—that is prices . . . and very decided views, if you please, on foreign policy (her husband is at the front)."

Mrs. Smith's practical experience can teach her what she wants altered, but only study and discussion will teach her to choose between the quack remedy and the cure. It is then the business, and the first and most urgent business, of women voters to open their minds to the need for real information, and to the value of real evidence, and to acquire that love which the statesman should share with the mathematician, the love of "pure truth."

D. O.

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"Mates."

THE ALTERED ATTITUDE.

They got into my carriage at an odd little station, stranded in the depths of the country, and from their clothes, their hands, their general air of fatigue, I surmised—without any great exercise of detective talent—that they hailed from the Leviathan munition works that sprawled beyond the railway line.

The man was perhaps 45, leather-skinned, long-faced, with oldish, kindly eyes, set in a criss-cross of wrinkles.

The girls I judged to be in the early twenties. There were two of them. One bounced into the compartment, all smiles and conversation; she pulled the man down beside her, and they continued an animated duel of ultra-blatant repartee, which the arrival of the train had evidently interrupted. The other girl came in more slowly. She dropped into the opposite corner and closed her eyes, as if too weary to think or speak. She was a white-faced, strained-looking slip of a thing. Her head drooped pathetically. To use a borrowed phrase, she was like a marionette whose wire had snapped.

From time to time the man glanced anxiously across at her. Obviously he was more than a little interested, and I scented a romance.

"Tired, mate?" he said.

"A bit. 'Twas 'ot in our room."

"Mate!" The word arrested me. What did it mean? Did any real significance attach to it? Then . . . "A term of endearment," I decided, and my interest lapsed.

A moment later I was again roused, this time by the livelier of the two girls.

"Talkin' o' wages, wa't was old Simpson wantin' yer for, Jim?"

"'E's makin' us a present o' our rise."

"'Ere! Get on! W'ere's the use in tryin' to lead me up the garden?"

"It's gawspel troof."

"No. Not reely! Say! Yer not gettin' at me any, Jim, are yer?"

"It's strite, I tells yer. Any objexions, Miss? Orl right, ain't it?"

She regarded him wide-mouthed. The pale girl opposite had opened her eyes and was listening with interest. He grinned and leaned towards her.

"Orl right, ain't it, matey?"

She nodded. "Simpson an' the rest, they're scared o' you men," she gave verdict. "They reckon you'll strike. Well, some people's lucky. You got what you want, anyway."

He leaned a little further forward.

"We ain't haccepted that rise," he announced, dramatically.

"W'at's that?"

He stuck out his elbows and sat back, delighted with the effect he had produced.

"'Ere, w'at more d'yer want?"

"'E ain't arf a dook now, are yer?"

Jim looked enigmatic. "I reckon it ain't for you to complain, any way," he said.

Pause.

"'Ere, Jim, tell us w'at yer gettin' at."

"We ain't hacceptin' no rise w'at don't hinclude our mates."

Another pause.

"'Mr. Simpson,' sez I, 'Mr. Simpson, w'at about some other people we know. W'at about the gals?' sez I.

"'Don't you think no more about the gals,' sez 'e; 'nor yet don't you think no more about strikin'. You take your rise an' 'ave a thankful 'eart!'

"'Ain't the gals been a-thinkin' about us?' I sez. 'Ain't they doin' the same work nor w'at we are? Ain't they workin' the same blinkin' hours in the same blinkin' old factory? I reckon we'll chuck thinkin' 'bout that strike w'en you start a-thinkin' 'bout them gals.' 'E didn't say no more, not hafter that, 'e didn't.'"

The train slowed down, and with reluctance I left Jim to his complacency and his love affair.

"There's a good deal in some terms of endearment," I decided.

I. M. FERGUSON.

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Sophia Jex-Blake.—II.*

Sophia Jex-Blake's active life begins with a battle. In the autumn of 1858 her diary refers curtly to what must have been a lively scene:—"Speaking to Ada (Miss Benson) on Thursday night revived the idea of Queen's College. Her sister there. Wrote Friday for prospectus. Tried to speak to Daddy last night. He very impracticable. I after a while very undutiful. At last I went into hysterics, which frightened him dreadfully, poor old man. I shall certainly go, I think." She did indeed go, and entered as a student at the first college for women in the year of its foundation. It was during the few years of London life which followed that Sophia Jex-Blake evolved her decision to become a teacher, a decision which was the occasion of a second storm and a second victory. A few months after her advent at the College she was offered the post of mathematical tutor. Naturally, she was delighted with the honour, and so were her parents, until her father realised its horrid implications. "Dearest," he writes, "I have only this moment heard that you contemplate being paid for the tutorship. It would be quite beneath you, darling, and I cannot consent to it. Take the post as one of honour and usefulness, and I shall be glad, and you will be no loser, be quite sure. But to be paid for the work would be to alter the thing completely, and would lower you sadly in the eyes of almost everybody." The correspondence which follows is a long and argumentative one, and Dr. Todd quotes it in full. In the course of it we find Sophia emerging as a feminist. "Why should the difference of my sex alter the laws of right and honour?" she asks, "Tom is doing on a large scale what I do on a small one—I cannot recognise any fundamental difference in the matter"; in reply to which Mr. Jex-Blake is only able to reiterate: "Tom's being a man makes all the difference; he has just taken the plain path of duty."

The decision to devote herself to the teaching profession, and to the improvement of its opportunities for women, persisted even though she met and worked with Miss Elizabeth Garrett, who was at that time hammering with solitary determination upon the outer works of the medical profession in London. From Queen's College Sophia went to Edinburgh in search of further educational facilities, from Edinburgh to Mannheim (a lonely and adventurous pilgrimage which vaguely recalls "Villette"), and from Mannheim, after further efforts in Edinburgh, to America. It was here, in Boston, that she came into touch with Dr. Lucy Sewall, Resident Physician to the New England Hospital for Women and Children, and so formed a friendship which was largely responsible for her change of career. The first sign of the new idea comes with a diary entry recorded soon after her arrival: "Sat for a couple of hours in Dr. Sewall's dispensary this morning. Some 36 cases heard and helped more or less. . . . Dr. Sewall, with such a kindly, ready sympathy, and such clear, firm treatment for them all. Certainly the right woman in the right place." Four years later she was established as a medical student, with a good deal of haphazard, practical experience behind her, in the new medical school for women established by Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell and her sister in New York. The selection of letters and diary entries with which Dr. Todd covers this period of American study constitutes four of the most delightful chapters in her book. They show us Sophia Jex-Blake at large in a great world, full of illimitable hopes, keen friendships, and passionate religious faith, her head unbowed, but not yet bloody from the bitter fight that was in store for her. But in the autumn of 1868 her father's death and her own consequent precipitate return to England put a sudden end to all American plans. Everything was abandoned but the resolve to be a doctor—that she took home with her. "You won't give up the work," wrote Dr. Sewall. "You will open the profession to women in England."

In England things were looking black. Miss Garrett was standing alone—the door by which she had entered the profession closed behind her. With much hindrance, she had obtained a diploma from the Society of Apothecaries, and was practising in London as an L.S.A. But the Society of Apothecaries had followed up their action by a resolution forbidding students in future to receive any part of their education privately; thereby making it impossible for any other woman to qualify in the same manner. Miss Garrett was doing valuable work for the cause by providing an effective demonstration of what a woman doctor could do, but she had left no foothold. Meanwhile, she considered that an immediate agitation for the opening of university degrees to women in England would be injudicious, and that the most effective policy was for women medical students to obtain their degrees abroad, and get into actual practice as quickly as possible at home; she did not, therefore, co-operate actively in the attack which Sophia Jex-Blake prepared against Edinburgh University soon after her return to England. At the outset, Sophia stood alone as a woman candidate for university education, and the first round of her contest brought her the shadow of victory. As Dr. Todd suggests, it is possible that the magnates of Edinburgh University did not at once realise the significance of what they were doing; "when a gifted young woman actually sat in their sanctums urging her plea, they could not bear to say, No." However that may be, at the end of March, 1869, Sophia Jex-Blake was formally admitted to classes by the Medical Faculty and the Senatus. But by that time opposition was wide awake; one of the leading members of the medical faculty, Dr. Christison, had threatened to resign if women were admitted, a hostile petition was organised from 180 students, the familiar arguments about the impropriety of mixed classes were brought into action, and the decision of the Senatus was reversed on appeal to the University Court. Thus after a fleeting taste of success Sophia Jex-Blake was thrust back to her starting-point.

From this point onwards the Edinburgh fight becomes a really big thing. Sophia Jex-Blake was no longer fighting alone; in the summer of 1869 she was joined by Mrs. Thorne and Miss Pechey; in the following year by Matilda Chaplain, Helen Evans, Mary Anderson, and Emily Bovell. Having been debarred from attending the regular classes it remained for the women students to find another road to the University qualification which they desired. The policy actually adopted was the organisation of special classes for women, combined with the demand that such teaching might allow them to sit for the necessary qualifying examinations. The disadvantage of such a policy is illustrated by an early letter from Miss Pechey. "I shall be sorry if my means will not allow me to take a full share of the expenses," she writes, "but I am afraid I shall not be able to afford more than double the usual fees for a man."

The demand was, however, granted by the University Court, but troubles came thick and fast. To begin with there was the famous scene of student mob violence at Surgeons' Hall. This occurred almost simultaneously with the first vain attempt of the women to obtain admission to the wards of the Royal Infirmary. At the infirmary contributors' meeting in St. Giles's Church Sophia Jex-Blake made a memorable and impassioned speech upon the intolerable wrongs of the women and the infamous behaviour of certain persons during the riot at Surgeons' Hall, which finally landed her in a libel action. Meanwhile a real menace was looming ahead; the opposition adopted the policy of questioning the legal validity of the University's action in admitting the women under any conditions. The question was one for the courts, and in the courts it was accordingly fought out in two long-drawn battles, which involved the women in heavy costs, infinite waste of time, and incalculable nerve-strain. The first, indeed, brought a spectacular but fleeting victory; but even for this Sophia paid a bitter price. At a time when her male colleagues were concentrating upon their work in preparation for the first professional examination, Sophia was fighting her case through the courts and in the Press; acting, in fact, as secretary, treasurer, and organiser to a great movement. "You have never told me how you are getting on with your exam. subjects," wrote Miss Pechey in September, 1872; "such silence is very ominous . . . it would be simply *awful* if you went up and didn't pass. . . ." A month later Sophia went up and failed. The bitterness of what she suffered is conceivable. It is bad enough to fail in an exam. under a decent veil of obscurity; but Sophia failed in the limelight, to the joy of her opponents and the freely expressed bewilderment of her friends. But the end of the campaign was not far off. In the following year the second legal contest was fought and the preceding decision reversed; the action of the University in admitting women was declared illegal, and all further responsibility towards them was therefore null and void. There could be no further examinations—no medical degree.

From 1873 onwards Dr. Todd's book provides more cheerful reading. She tells of how Sophia Jex-Blake was instrumental in founding the London School of Medicine for Women; of how a Bill was pushed through Parliament to confer upon the Universities those powers which they supposed themselves not to possess, and of how that Bill was followed by the gradual opening of University doors to women. But the wildest romance of this most romantic story is the romance of the Edinburgh campaign. Dr. Todd's readers will rejoice in it none the less because they are able to sympathise with those contemporaries who pointed out that the surest way to Constantinople was not over the rocks of Gallipoli.

Mary Stocks.

* "Life of Sophia Jex-Blake." By Margaret Todd. (Macmillan & Co. 18s. net.)

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Reviews.

THE WOMAN'S PART.

The Woman's Part: A Record of Munition Work. By L. K. Yates. (Hodder & Stoughton. 1s. 3d.)

Even now it is not without a momentary catch of surprise that we realise that "the woman's part" in these days of war means machinery. We are used to the notion that woman's part means the home, as indeed it does; and it is only now that we are beginning to understand that the home is so wide a thing that it may mean, and does mean, its defence and its government as well as its detail and its domestic management.

In this fascinating booklet Miss Yates gives us a vivid picture of women's part in munitions work, as seen from its successful side. She tells with vividness and skill the story of the introduction of women into all the multifarious processes of modern war engineering: she describes the variety of their work, their adaptability, their enthusiasm, their training and their success. She tells how they have advanced from repetition work to "setting up," and from setting up to other skilled jobs; how they have spread, like the incoming tide, invading not only shell making and filling, but gun making, fuze making, instrument making, optical glass, electricity, and finally ships—an invasion, indeed, that bids fair to transform the industrial world. She puts these technical matters into readable form, and shows throughout the book an understanding of the psychological element which makes this new woman labour so refreshing and so novel a problem. She understands how women feel for their machines, and tells how they look at their work: how they sing and dance: what sort of things they "fuss" over and why they love their new life, and she draws a picture that is both inspiring and inspiriting of the ways of these new engineers. She describes, too—perhaps with an over-great optimism—the arrangements and the policy of the Ministry of Munitions with regard to housing and welfare and discipline and food supply. She tells of the health arrangements, the first aid, the infant care, the canteens, the hostels and the intra and extra mural welfare work. She talks of pianos and dancing classes, and of women police, and leaves the impression that all is well organised and well controlled—and she is so far right that marvels have been accomplished. But for all that her book is incomplete, for there is not one word in it on the vital question of pay. Miss Yates tells us how well women make lenses: she does not tell us that lens making has degenerated from a fully skilled trade for no other reason than that women have come into it; she tells us how wonderfully they make aeroplanes; she does not tell us that aeroplane manufacture is now almost universally condemned to be a "woman's trade"—or, in other words, a "badly paid trade" after the war. She shows pictures of women at work in the carpenter's shops: she does not print the Woodworking Order of the Ministry of Munitions, by which women get 6d. an hour and men 1s. for aeroplane work. No doubt it was a necessary omission, for the question of pay gives a black colour to all these rosy facts, and looms like a thunder cloud over any hopeful prospects of the future. Miss Yates suggests with skill and imagination the effects that the enthusiasm of women and their interest in their work may have upon our industrial life, but we cannot forget that they bring to the labour world not only skill and courage and energy and goodwill, but also the fatal tradition of underpayment. The fault is not theirs, and the remedy is not in their hands, and they will not be the only sufferers. The question however is a vital one, not only for the women who have so splendidly done their part, but also for the men who have so splendidly helped them. We could wish for a companion volume on "The Woman's Pay," but it would not be such good reading. R. S.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN NEW YORK.

We congratulate our contemporary, the New York *Nation*, on its number of June 1st, which is of special interest to women. It has articles on women in Art, in Music, in the Drama, in Education, Politics and Literature. It abounds in reviews and advertisements of books by women, and indeed we are almost tempted to think it gives us too much of a good thing! Of special interest to our readers, we believe, is the article by Mrs. Norman de R. Whitehouse on the activities of the New York State Woman Suffrage Party since the victory of November 6th. Her description of its activities offers an interesting comparison with the new work of the N.U.W.S.S. The N.Y.S.W.S.P. decided, after November 6th, to remain a "non-partisan group of voters," realising that its fundamental work as a body was now "to prepare the women of the state for good citizenship." It has accordingly established committees on education, Americanisation, legislation, congressional work, labour, intelligence, rural problems and war service, to carry out this work.

The article gives a glowing account of the aims and achievements of these committees. The training schools for teachers of citizenship set up in New York City and 40 up-state counties by the Education Committee have been thoroughly well attended. The citizenship classes which followed these courses have been in such demand that as soon as one series was completed a new series had to begin. During the two months before the general enrolment day (May 25th) 160,000 printed lessons in citizenship were distributed to department stores, insurance companies, banks, and trust companies for the use of women employees. Classes were also held in mothers' meetings, public schools, Y.W.C.A., banks, lunch and tea rooms, ladies' speciality shops and restaurants, and the Hippodrome chorus.

The Intelligence Committee reckons to obtain and tabulate information about every candidate for public office and every public official, and it is hoped that this information, besides arousing women's intelligent interest in those who control public affairs, will ensure a better class of candidate, for "the next step will be an intensive study of the merits of the respective candidates and principles."

The Legislative Committee watches the activities of the State Legislature, and urges individuals and organisations to take action on important measures.

Finally there is the War Service Committee, the existence of which seems to discredit the claim of the party to be non-partisan. "Education for citizenship in relation to war service forms an important part of the programme of the committee. Educational propaganda is needed to bring out the direct connection between the principles of government and the application of these principles to specific instances." Nevertheless, Mrs. Whitehouse thinks "it is not too much to assert that the women's movement is the greatest civic and educational force in the state to-day." D. O.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS and mention THE COMMON CAUSE when ordering goods.

THE ENGLISHWOMAN for July has several important articles touching on the problems of the moment, while among its lighter matter is "The Motor School from Within" (referred to in our Notes and News), and so excellent a review of the drama of the day that even those upon whom the cares of war time rest most heavily should find refreshment in it.

One of the outstanding articles on reform is Dr Jane Walker's "Beware of Constructive Legislation," dealing with 40 D. Defence of the Realm Act, and other attempts at grappling with the social evil by mere law-making. Another is Lord Henry Bentinck's "Prisons and Prisoners." The articles have this similarity, that both maintain, as Lord Henry puts it, "that the criminal is our fellow-citizen," and that "many can be restored to better ways by other methods than imprisonment." Those who believe that punishment should be remedial will find much to support their view in the facts so ably marshalled by Lord Henry. Dr. Walker, an acknowledged authority in her subject, goes to Mrs. Josephine Butler for a text—"beware of constructive legislation"—beware of building upon the sand, beware of giving countenance to legislation founded upon the tradition of an outworn and false morality. Possibly in her insistence upon this essential point, she is not quite just to those who hold that a wholly non-possumus attitude on the part of social reformers savours of cowardice, and begets a somewhat irresponsible frame of mind. Be this so or not, Dr. Walker exhibits, together with a deep and broad view of her subject, a high belief in the goodness that is in human nature, which, coming from a distinguished physician, should put new strength into the faint-hearted idealist, whose faith in a great principle wavers directly it is tested by ugly facts. With all the ugly facts before her, Dr. Walker declares that only by establishing one standard, and that the highest, for men and women alike, can society be freed from that which now seems to bid fair to strangle out its life. There is also an admirable review of the Women's Movement in India. This subject, of immediate practical importance, is also treated of by Mrs. Fawcett in this issue of THE COMMON CAUSE. Both articles should undoubtedly be read by feminists anxious to learn how their principles may be applied throughout the Empire.

A RAPTURE OF DEATH AND OTHER POEMS. By Josephine M. Baretti. (The Carlyle Press, Bristol. 1s. 6d.)

There are in this book graceful conceits and lines, such as the last stanza of "The Call," and

"Clytie, cool with splash and spray,
Whiter than the moon-mild may."

which remind us sometimes of the Elizabethan Song-books, sometimes of Donne. But the modern note and mood are not lacking:—

"Wet, wet the sheet,
And wet my face with sleet
Of sodden tears!
. . . . . .
"Wild, wild the woe
Of night-fall in the rain!
My heart's quick to and fro
Is wild with too much pain!"

"Sleet of sodden tears" might almost be Francis Thompson's. Miss Baretti is most herself in "The Fall," a sonnet which has a very bad beginning but ends firmly and with an attractive directness:—

"... Have we not rather made good speed
Considering how that once our feet were splay?
And Eve it was had heart to cross the moat
And force his godhead down poor Adam's throat."

All the sketches of Margaret Wynne Nevinson's WORKHOUSE CHARACTERS (Allen & Unwin, 3s. 6d. net) have, she says, been suggested by actual fact and experience. Her "characters" are poor, aged or drunken, insane or debauched, halt or maimed, but they are primarily individuals, generally lovable, always pitiable, never contemptible. And as each story is, roughly speaking, more dismal than the last the cumulative gloom of the book would be unrelieved were it not for the implicit challenge "What are you going to do about it?" If we are not among those who find much comfort in the amazing endurance and cheerfulness of human beings in excruciating circumstances, we must feel, like the professor who attended the funeral of one of these workhouse characters, "I ought not to have let her come to this." The Poor Law, says Mrs. Nevinson, is in the melting-pot. Well and good (we wish the lunatic asylums were in the melting-pot too). But prevention is better than cure. If there are people in any doubt as to what things should be prevented, let them read Mrs. Nevinson's book.

D. O.

THE SOUTH LONDON HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN.

The sixth annual report (1917) of the South London Hospital for Women reminds us again of its noble objects:—

To meet the great and growing demand on the part of women for medical treatment by members of their own sex.

To provide, in addition to ordinary hospital accommodation, private wards for women of limited means at an inclusive charge of from one to four guineas a week.

To afford further scope for post-graduate training for medical women.

That there is a long waiting list for admission speaks for itself; also, that the total attendances of out-patients in 1917 numbered 28,248.

The Hospital has made a gallant and successful struggle against the ever-increasing difficulties of war time. When we know that the average cost of each in-patient has been £2 10s. 7d. a week, we learn something of what women's organisation means. We heartily endorse the following striking observation occurring in the Report:—"*It is earnestly hoped that those interested in the work of the Hospital may find it possible to express their sympathy in practical form.*" Address to the Secretary, South London Hospital for Women, South Side, Clapham Common, S.W. 4.

The hospital wants money, it also wants arm-chairs and wheel-chairs, and couches and pianos, and plants and toys and books (nice ones), and linen and clothing (nice clothing), and letters for Convalescent Homes, and still more money.

WOMEN WORKERS & THE FUTURE.—3.

Wives & Widows without Dependents.

If the woman worker has only herself to consider, having no one dependent upon her, a Scottish Widows Fund Deferred Annuity will enable her to make provision for her later years, when she no longer has the desire or ability to continue working.

Whereas an amount deposited in a Savings Bank would be used up in a comparatively few years after retirement, a similar amount invested in a Deferred Annuity would provide a fixed income after reaching a stipulated age, for every remaining year of her life, no matter to what age she might live.

All wage-earning women should write for a free copy of the interesting new booklet "The Future of Women Workers" explaining how, by means of small payments out of present earnings, a woman may make suitable provision for her future.

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The Lancet, Dec. 14th, 1918.

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The Elsie Inglis Memorial.

On Friday, the 5th, at 3 p.m., a meeting was held at the Mansion House to inaugurate the London Memorial to Dr. Inglis, and some generous gifts in its support were announced. For Serbia she died, and in Serbia her spirit of hope, of creative energy, is to live again. For this "Memorial" is to be no dead thing of stone, it is to be a Chair of Medicine in the University of Belgrade. With the cordial approval of Serbia's representative in this country, the Chair is to be filled by a British woman, symbol of our mutual friendship. We believe that all will be glad to help this cause, even those who have not known and loved Dr. Inglis as Serbia knew her, and as we knew her. Among those who form the Memorial Committee are Dr. Aldrich Blake, Miss Lena Ashwell, Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour, Sir James Barrie, Lord Robert Cecil, Mrs. Fawcett, Sir Alfred Keogh, Bishop of Oxford, Vicomtesse de la Panouse, Hon. Sir A. Stanley, Father Nickolai Velimrovic, and many other distinguished lovers of Serbia.

Wanted: Five Thousand Patriotic Lady Motorists.

Advertisements to this effect appear in every paper and on every hoarding: in this summer weather they make an almost irresistible appeal to those who work in offices, particularly when set out in the attractive pictorial shape of the posters of a certain school of motoring.

He is an unusually well-favoured young man (the young man on the poster), and though he does not wear the King's uniform he wears one almost more becoming. The young lady, too, by his side is evidently happy—happy because she also is looking her best, and, incidentally, is, as she believes, doing her bit for her country. But we are obliged to ask the question, *is* she doing it? This charming poster makes known the existence of a school of motoring, which teaches ladies, and men too, to motor (in five half-hour lessons), and points out (*a*) that the Government Departments require the services of five thousand motorists; (*b*) that the school makes no charge for introduction to posts. The fees are small, the promises large.

The publicity agent who has this matter in hand has done his work well. All would-be pupils should make careful enquiries before they pay their fees, however. If they feel that they may not be qualified drivers after half-hour lessons let them pause, for the country's need for motorists is strictly limited to those who can drive motors.

Articles on this subject appear in *Truth* of June 25th, and in the July *Englishwoman*, which we commend to our readers. There is also a Motor Information Department in the London Society's Women's Service Bureau at 58, Victoria Street, which can be consulted free of charge.

THIRD "COMMON CAUSE" HUT.

The very kind and generous friends who have helped us in the erection of our Common Cause Huts will, we know, be delighted to hear that the Third Hut, which is now practically ready, except for the fittings, **WILL BE OPENED ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF JULY.**

The Hut is at Netheravon, and is a large Recreation Room, with small rest room, which will be a reading and writing room. There will be a canteen for light refreshments, and two cubicles for the Y.W.C.A. workers, who will be there day and night. The girls who will use our Hut will be the Q.M.A.A.C. engaged on work connected with aircraft. During the summer months an allotment garden will be started, and as the winter approaches the Hut will be a veritable god-send to the girls, as outside their official billets they will have nowhere else to go.

Our readers will be glad to hear that our Hut at Coventry has been a great success, thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed by thousands of girls, and that the second C.C. Hut in France is also a great boon. The sum of over £600 has been subscribed for this third Hut, and only £145 is needed to complete the gift. Will all our kind friends make a great effort and give just a little more so that the opening may be a perfect success—that is, that it may be opened free of debt. There is so little time now, the opening being arranged for July, that we earnestly ask our readers to send their gifts *at once*.

Contributions will be gratefully received by the Editor, The Common Cause, 62, Oxford Street.

	£	s.	d
Already acknowledged	600	16	6
Mrs. D. M. Heckels	5	0	0
Mrs. M. E. Lehmann		2	6
Miss C. M. Glubb		5	0
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THE NATIONAL GUILDS MOVEMENT AND WOMEN IN INDUSTRY.

On June 25th at the Fabian Hall Mr. Cole spoke on the National Guilds movement in its relation to women, Mrs. Pember Reeves in the chair. He stated that every point of view on this question existed in the movement,—there was as yet no official policy. Mr. Cole made his points under two heads: (1) The position of women when, or if, the movement reaches its ideal; (2) Problems of the transition period. Mr. Cole himself holds that if women desire to come into industry in larger numbers they should be free to do so, and that they should be treated on terms of absolute equality in the guilds, but he does not believe, should the present weight of economic pressure be removed, that they will so desire. It may be assumed that women will remain a small minority in most of the guilds, and for this reason they will probably not be the most powerful element in them.

All questions of actual restrictions upon women's labour should be a social matter, to be determined independently of the guilds themselves.

In this connection he pointed out that the guilds movement differs from the syndicalist movement, in that the former advocates a State authority outside itself to deal with certain classes of problem.

Mr. Cole holds that women will find their chief scope in this sphere—in the political, rather than the industrial, element in the State. If they do not organise to this end—as housewives, as consumers—there will be a real danger of their status suffering under the guild system. But he is convinced that there is an urgent need for a more definite organisation of the State in this direction, and that if the women choose they can become a powerful factor in this field.

In regard to women in the transition period, which will probably be long, Mr. Cole holds that the present attitude of the Trade Unionists—or of many of them—is foolish, for it appears to be founded merely on the idea that "women may seize the men's jobs"—in effect, that the women ought not to be there, and therefore ought to be paid as little as possible. Mr. Cole himself does not desire more women in industry, because he believes there is a danger of their diluting the organisation of the working class, and that "taking all labour for their sphere," they may break down existing standards. But any coercive exclusion because of sex alone he deprecates. In his opinion, the establishment of advisory committees representative of the women's interests will be for some time to come a stronger line of advance than the mere insistence upon a guaranteed number of women on the executives, though the placing of some women there also should not be neglected.

The problem of women and shop stewards is urgent. In some cases men have excluded them, in some cases both sexes work together. Here also advisory committees of a representative character should be of use.

In conclusion, Mr. Cole affirmed that though a difference in the interests of men and women in industry does exist at present, it will become less and less in proportion as democratic organisation becomes perfected.

The speaker's lucidity and sincerity, as well as the fairness with which he met all criticism, adds greatly to the value of this important contribution to the solution of the problems with which feminists are now faced.

A. H. W.

Correspondence.

WOMEN CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS.

Madam,—I question the statement that the N.U.W.S.S. is being "bled white" by the W.C.As. Of the societies which have dissolved since the passing of the Representation of the People Act only a very few have done so in order to merge into W.C.As. It is significant that none of these, so far as I know, have formed under Scheme X. It may be true that the associations themselves do not know under which scheme they have formed, but it is surely a reflection on the intelligence of our local societies to imply that they themselves are indifferent. I believe that they are fully aware of the distinction between the two schemes, and that the more timid societies find it very easy to "camouflage" their suffrage colours under Y, and so conceal from the Mayoress the fact that they, as a society, are taking any part in the movement.

Of the popularity of the W.C.As. among our societies there is no doubt, and the reasons are not far to seek. In the first place they realise the immense responsibility of the N.U.W.S.S. towards the new voters. It gained them the vote; it owes them, I believe, one of its first duties, in assisting them in its use. In the second place, while fully supporting the "Equality" formula, societies feel that it gives at present little scope for work in local areas, especially in small places, and that the greater part of the work is really a task for experts, which *must* be done at headquarters. I think many members of our executive must have realised this as our programme has developed. The formation of a W.C.A. gives active employment to local societies which would otherwise be idle or engaged in other than feminist work.

With regard to the proposed association of W.C.As. with the N.U.W.S.S., it is suggested that those in favour of the association wish to bring it about *before* the conversion of the W.C.A. to the Equality formula. This is not the case. It was a part of Scheme X (most unfortunately deleted by Council) that associations *accepting* the Equality formula might become associate societies of the N.U.W.S.S. It is assumed by some of us that no Association would accept this formula, and—still more astonishing—that it would fail of its purpose if it did so. We have not yet tried to get the formula accepted, and I suggest that we are altogether too timid and too much convinced of our own unpopularity. There is really no object in creating an imaginary wilderness in order that we may go out into it to preach the gospel of sex equality. It is quite probable that no wilderness exists, or that, if it does, it is only anxious to blossom like a rose if it is given the chance. But no chance is to be given to the wilderness inhabited by W.C.As. It seems that it would be the crowning offence for these "enfants terribles" to accept the doctrine of sex equality and to seek to associate with their stony-hearted parent. "Equality" is to be the sole prerogative of the N.U.W.S.S. Alone it is to be worked out, in remote grandeur on a mountain top, and it will be death to any other society so much as to touch the mountain.

Violet Eustace.

Y.212 Y.213 Y.214 Y.215

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COUNTRY COTTAGES.

MADAM,—I hope you will give me space to protest against Mrs. Hamilton's article in this week's number of THE COMMON CAUSE, for her repetition of the parrot cry against "tied cottages." She mixes up the attack with a general one on bad cottages, and another on isolated cottages, which has much to commend it, but a tied cottage may be in the heart of the village and thoroughly well built, and equally a free cottage may be isolated and tumbledown.

Let us take the usual case of the tied cottage. A landowner equips his land with a certain number of cottages for his workpeople. He also, as Mrs. Hamilton mentions, builds cottages for his coachman, his gardener, his gamekeeper. When he has done this, is it reasonable to demand that he should let the cottages to labourers working on another man's land? Where, then, are his own men to live?

I think the absurdity of my coachman living in the cottage belonging to another man's stables, while perhaps a friend's gardener lived in the cottage placed conveniently near my own stables, would strike everybody at once, while the dismay of the gamekeeper who had to live in the middle of the village would only be equalled by that of the schoolmaster (who also inhabits a tied house) if he had to reside in the cottage built for the gamekeeper in the middle of the woods.

Goodness knows there are enough real evils to be remedied in rural housing without bringing in fancy ones. Landowners should be encouraged to house their own workpeople, and if the Government and local authorities would do likewise that would be some help to counter the shortage of cottages, which is the most serious cause of bad housing in the country. If cottages are plenty the labourers will not take the bad ones, or serve the farmers who cannot house them decently. The great falling-off in cottage-building is among those small owners whose favourite investment of a few hundred pounds saved used to be two or three cottages. Usually these were not "isolated." They were built on the outskirts of the village, or on the border of a common where other similar small owners had little plots and had also speculated in building.

In truth, these cottages were often very badly built, and now provide the best examples of early decay. The quite reasonable requirements of local building bye-laws are partly the cause of the cessation of this form of enterprise. The rise in rates, and the speeches with which Mr. Lloyd-George introduced his land legislation, also contributed to frightening the small speculative builder away. But now that he is gone there is no one to take his place.

If the landowners build for all the people they employ, there will still be left a considerable number of families unprovided for. Not everybody in the country is a farm labourer. There are all the small tradesmen and their workmen, there are the independent labourers (some of the best men in the country, who will call no one man master, but take work here and there as it comes), and there are the servants of the professional men and other residents. Who is to provide houses for all these?

The whole question is a very good example of the way of the reformer lying between Scylla and Charybdis. We have raised the standard of cottage-building till it no longer pays to build cottages. We are now calling upon the State to come in and build houses for us. The probable result of the State taking such action will be to stop all private building. I only hope the officials (which are the State as it appears in private life) will show more alertness and reasonableness in providing for the public need than some of their kidney do.

Let me say in conclusion that I agree with Mrs. Hamilton in her objection to isolated cottages; with the exception of the gamekeeper, I do not see any necessity, in these days of bicycles, for building labourers' cottages in the distant parts of the farm. The cows and horses, whose attendants must live near them, are usually stabled close to the farm-house itself. In some cases it may be necessary, and some men do not dislike it. It is not so lonely as many farms in Canada, and plenty of men bred in luxurious surroundings are ready to live there. But it is always very hard on the women.

MAUD SELBORNE.

LEGISLATION AND THE SOCIAL PROBLEM.

MADAM,—With regard to Mrs. Swanwick's article in your last issue, may I submit that the small number of cases that will be brought under any given law is not an argument against the law? For example, few women will consent to bring an action for rape; that is not a reason why there should not be a law against rape. I would also urge that the fact that no woman has taken action against a soldier for infecting her with disease proves nothing whatever. Mrs. Swanwick must surely be aware that (whatever Lord Derby said or implied) it is not an offence for a soldier to infect a woman; consequently she cannot bring an action against him. Again, I do not think that unless you penalise young girls you achieve nothing, since I do not think it "nothing" if we succeed in penalising the men who infected those girls. The fact that the military authorities would not agree with me leaves me unmoved.

To bracket together proposals so fundamentally different as 40 D., the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, the Sexual Offences Bill, and the penalisation of those who communicate venereal disease, and call them all "panic legislation," is to substitute abuse for argument, and I venture very respectfully to ask Mrs. Swanwick to withdraw that epithet. To be aware of a very serious danger is not necessarily to be in a panic.

My own feeling is that the real crux of the matter lies in the difficulty of diagnosis, and it would be a tremendous help if you could obtain from some medical member of the National Council for Combating Venereal Disease the reasons which make the Council support a proposal which, according to some very able women doctors, would be found absolutely impracticable. If this point could be cleared up one way or the other, we should all be in a better position to decide the question of legislation.

A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

MADAM,—It seems to me that many of our difficulties in dealing with the social question come from our want of clear definitions of the words we use. Even Dr. Wilson uses the word "illicit" when speaking of extra-marital intercourse. When we grasp the facts that such intercourse is *not* illegal (illicit), that prostitution is not illegal, and that soliciting is not illegal unless it annoys the person in the street who is solicited, then we begin to realise how difficult the whole question is.

Public opinion has never come to the point of willing to have the trade of prostitution made illegal. About three years ago the writer of this letter asked a noted worker in the cause of morality if he and others, who had tried to get various Bills passed in the House of Commons, could not try to have this trade made illegal if those who bought and sold in it were eighteen years or under. Probation for six months was the punishment suggested—not fine or imprisonment. The answer was that there was not a chance of getting such a Bill passed. Those who work among girls who have "gone wrong" know well that thousands of men come to where immorality is to be bought, as we go to bootshops when we want to buy boots, use the known signs—a nod or a gesture, or a movement, or a turn-away-to-be-followed attitude—and the girl understands and follows, and all goes smoothly and no police officer moves in the matter, nor could he move in it.

Prostitution is not defined in any of our Bills, and some of us think that it is the last thing the framers of the Bill wish to have defined. The dictionaries define it as the selling of the use of the body for gain, and no one wishes to have to prove that money passes. It certainly has not passed when most prostitutes are arrested. It is far too difficult to prove. Who could have proved it, after the dealings of "The Pretty Lady" with her client? Therefore our young people see that it is not Immorality—the big thing—that England objects to, but offering it if the person to whom it is offered does not happen to want it. If any person wants it then all is well, from the trader's point of view. No short way of dealing with the social evil is possible. The wisest, it seems to some of us, is to give full, clear sex teaching to boys and girls, and to youths and maidens, and so to instil into their minds fine ideals of social service and high and beautiful ideas about love and marriage that it becomes impossible for them to injure each other and the race.

Punishment must be equal between the sexes, if it is given, if there is to be justice in the land; but who believes that the clauses in the two Bills before us will be used really fairly between men and women? And if this is so, why do we want them? Is not the simplest thing to have a certificate of health before marriage? And should not all doctors be freed from fear of libel when they try to save people from venereal disease? When it would be almost impossible to prove, in the case of an infected person, that the person accused was the person who gave the disease (for he or she might have had it before and have not known of it, or he or she might have cohabited with a third party who was not even named), will laws to punish those who expose others be workable? And can any be carried out without enforced examination?

LOUISE BULLEY.

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We confidently believe that this appeal will secure a response from all suffragists who desire to advance still further the movement for which Mrs. Henry Fawcett has done so much, and to express, in enduring form, their gratitude for her devoted life-work and leadership.

Yours faithfully,

CONSUELO MARLBOROUGH.	ELEANOR CECIL.
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The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.
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Headquarter Notes.

Owing to the much wider range of subjects now included in the objects of the Union many opportunities arise for co-operation with societies whose objects coincide, or partly coincide, with some point in our programme. Thus the Penal Reform League are pressing, among others, for the following reforms: That the Governors and Medical Officers of Women's Prisons should be women; that at least two women should be added to the Prison Commission, and that women should not be cleared out of Court when men unconnected with the case are allowed to remain.

All points are being supported by the N.U

The Union is also supporting the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child in their movement for the reform of the Bastardy Acts. The National Council wishes to see the 5s. limit to affiliation orders abolished, the mother relieved of the costs in any bona-fide case to prove paternity, and the Collecting Officer of the Court enabled to institute any proceedings that may become necessary if the father's payments fall into arrears.

Treasurer's Report.

Much encouraging response has come in from the Appeal for a Permanent Fund for the N.U., and our 100 new subscribers have already sent or promised subscriptions. Varying in amount, we would particularly call attention to one of £50 from Miss Philippa Fawcett (in War Loan) and to several of £10 from Dr. and Mrs. Bethune Baker, Mrs. Bowman and Miss Courtauld. Never was money more acceptable to our work, with our seven energetic organisers travelling about the country from Scotland to Cornwall, explaining to our members the new methods necessitated by new circumstances and new powers, and enlisting fresh supporters. We must not check their valuable work for lack of funds, and we beg everyone who cares for the Union and believes in its new possibilities for usefulness to become a subscriber. We must secure at least a thousand new subscribers, and some of them for large sums, during July. Will *you* send in your name at once in the spirit of Prof. Turner of Oxford, whose letter we print?

"In response to your circular letter, though it is a time of much financial stress and many claims, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of helping with a subscription; nor of writing to you to send my very heartiest and most respectful greetings and congratulations on the great step you have seen gained. I will not call it a consummation, because I see and know that you only regard it as a stepping-stone—your courage and energy are only stimulated, and not relaxed. But at least you have now a great victory in retrospect as well as those in prospect."

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Mrs. Keynes	1	1	0
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Miss Mary Lakin		10	0
Mrs. Tattersall		10	0
Miss E. L. Lyon		10	6
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Professor B. Foxley	1	0	0
Mrs. C. A. Fyffe	1	1	0
Mrs. Edwards	1	1	0
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Mrs. Herbert Cohen	1	1	0
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Miss Barnes	1	1	0
Miss Mary Lupton		5	0
Mrs. Osmaston	2	2	0
Mrs. Napier		5	0
Mrs. Webb	1	1	0
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Reports from Societies.

LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE W.S.S.—The old Leicester and Leicestershire W.S.S., founded in 1887, was dissolved last May, in consequence of the passing of the Franchise Act, but has now been reconstituted to work for the enlarged objects of the N.U.W.S.S. By invitation of the reconstituted Society, a conference of representatives of the women's societies of Leicester was held at the Edward Wood Hall on June 25th, for discussion on the subject of the spread of venereal disease, with special reference to 40 D. A most informative address was given by Miss F. Wakefield, of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, and resolutions were unanimously passed condemning Regulation 40 D, calling for the raising of the age of consent to eighteen, and of the age at which young people might be permitted on premises licensed to sell liquor to eighteen, as well as asking for the appointment of women police in Leicester.

BIRMINGHAM.—The annual meeting was held on June 20th, the chair being occupied by Rev. J. Ivory Cripps. The Reports of the Secretary and Treasurer recorded a vigorous year's work, but the financial position was far from satisfactory, and the President (Mrs. Osler) made a strong appeal for continued and generous support, pointing out that no other society exists which can cover the same field of work. The chairman reviewed with pride a twenty years' connection with the Suffrage Movement, and looked forward to the direct influence of women voters to bring to bear in the Government of the country more imagination, more heart, and a finer morality. Miss Chrystal Macmillan gave an interesting address on the future work of the National Union and the special reforms called for, *e.g.*, the admission of women to Parliament and the Privy Council, their appointment as Magistrates and on juries, their right to retain their own nationality in spite of marriage with aliens, the guardianship of their children, and pensions for widows with young families. The officers were re-elected for the ensuing year, and the committee elected by ballot.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.—A very interesting meeting was held on June 28th at 12, Windsor Terrace, by kind permission of Mrs. Thomson, when the committee and members of the society made a presentation to Dr. Ethel Williams, to commemorate the granting of the Franchise to women, and as a sign of their appreciation of all she has done for the women's cause in the North. The presentation took the form of a model in bronze of the Samothracian Winged Victory, and a cheque for £60, for some charitable purpose.

Miss Elisabeth Stevenson was in the chair, and the presentation was made in the names of Miss Newbegin and Mrs. Weddell, the two members of longest standing on the committee. Mrs. Spence Watson, Miss Moberly, Miss Peile, Miss Conway, Mr. Augus Watson and Mr. Moncrieff expressed great admiration for the ideals, the courage, and the generosity of purpose shown by Dr. Williams in her many years' work for the enfranchisement of women. It was felt, too, that in addition to her service on the Suffrage Committee the work she had done in many other directions was a very valuable contribution to the cause of women's progress.

ILKLEY.—The fifth annual meeting of the Ilkley Society was held in the G.F.S. Club Room on Friday, June 28th, at 3 p.m. In the absence of Mrs. Rabaghati, through illness, Mrs. Arthur Dawson presided. The hon. officers and committee were re-elected. The hon. secretary's report, and the treasurer's balance sheet were read and adopted. At the conclusion of the business, Miss Hartop, organising secretary to the West Riding Federation, addressed the meeting on the future work of suffrage societies.

GLASGOW.—To explain the powers of the Representation of the People Act (1918), emphasising special points, three meetings have been held in the office on the 18th, 20th, and 25th June, These meetings were for members (who were invited to bring each a friend), and were addressed by Miss Foggo (organiser).

Three drawing-room meetings have also taken place, by the kindness of Miss Melville, Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. J. T. T. Brown, the audiences being mainly non-suffragists. These gatherings were also addressed by Miss Foggo, who outlined the Bill as it applied to women, and exposed many of the anomalies in it. At all meetings questions were asked and answered, and keen interest shewn.

SALISBURY.—On Saturday, June 29th, a very fine and impressive service was held in Salisbury Cathedral, by the wish of the Dean, "in order

to seek the blessing of God upon the responsibilities which will rest upon the women of the country in the large share they are called upon to take in the counsels of the nation." The holding of this service was announced by the Mayor of Salisbury, at the request of a number of organisations of women. The service was open to men and women.

HUDDERSFIELD.—The annual meeting was held in the Mayor's Reception Room, Town Hall. Miss Hartop (W.R.F. organizer), in the unavoidable absence of Miss Chrystal Macmillan, gave the address. We passed a unanimous and hearty resolution not to relax our efforts until a full and final victory be obtained for Woman's Suffrage.

Miss Siddon, our President, and Mrs. Blameres, a member of our Committee, were congratulated on their new honor, the Order of the British Empire.

Forthcoming Meetings (N.U.W.S.S).

JULY 8.

Bermondsey—Bermondsey Settlement, Farncombe Street—Women's Meeting—Speaker: Miss Margaret Jones—Subject: "Women's New Opportunities and Responsibilities" 3 p.m.

Walsall—Temperance Hall—Speakers: Lady Nott-Bower, Mrs. Ring—Subject: "Child Welfare" 3 p.m.

JULY 9.

Birmingham—Halesowen—Speaker: Mrs. Ring—Subject: "Mothers and the Vote" 7 p.m.

JULY 11.

West Bromwich—Free Library Lecture Room—Public Meeting—Speakers: Miss E. F. Rathbone, Mrs. Osler 8 p.m.

Poplar—Presbyterian Settlement, 56, East India Dock Road—Speaker: Mrs. C. D. Rackham—Subject: "Citizenship from the Liberal Standpoint" 8 p.m.

JULY 12.

Bristol—13, Apsley Road—Speaker: Mrs H. A. L. Fisher 3 p.m.

JULY 15.

Wandsworth—Springfield Hall, Wandsworth Road—Speaker: Miss Ruth Young—Subject: "The Duties and Privileges of Citizenship" 3 p.m.

JULY 18.

South London—Citizens' Discussion Circle, The People's Church, Denmark Hill—Speaker: Miss Escott—Chair: Miss Mary Fielden—Subject: "Continuation Schools" 7 p.m.

JULY 22.

Norwood—Railton Road, Herne Hill, United Methodist Church—Women's Meeting—Speaker: Miss Margaret Jones—Subject: "Responsibilities of the New Woman Voter" 3 p.m.

WOMEN CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS.

The following letter, written in answer to one of Miss Llewelyn Davies which appeared in the "Co-Operative News," has not been inserted by that paper:—

DEAR SIR,—The letter from Miss Llewelyn Davies in your issue of April 27th has just been brought to my notice. As Honorary Secretary to the scheme for Women Citizens' Associations, initiated by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, I shall be glad if you will give me space for dealing with one or two points raised in that letter. As you are aware, the N.U.W.S.S. is not a middle-class organization, nor is it biassed on the side of property or of the Church, and its object, in initiating the work of Women Citizens' Associations, is to give to all women an opportunity of hearing different sides of all questions, and thus being able to form a real opinion on each question as it arises. Of course, if Labour women and women of the Co-operative Guild refuse to join the Associations, there arises a great danger that these bodies will in time become powerful middle-class organizations, with a definite bias in one direction, their members being deprived of the opportunity of associating with women of a different point of view, and of hearing questions of Labor, Co-operation, etc., freely discussed by women who have enjoyed the education which the Guild and the Labor organizations provide.

This, I think, is a real danger, both to the Women Citizens' Association, to the Labor and Co-operative organizations, and to the country as a whole.

Miss Llewelyn Davies refers to a lecture on "Housing" to be given to a local W.C.A., and asks whether the Association will urge that all reform must entail taxation of land value and higher wages. If the Women's Co-operative Guild is represented on the Local Committee of the W.C.A., its representatives will, of course, see that that point of view is brought before the meeting, and it will, no doubt, be of extreme interest to members of the Association who have had no opportunity of hearing the problem discussed from that side. If no representatives of the Women's Co-operative Guild are present, there is every chance that their case will go by default.

I am, etc.,
(Sd.) VIOLET EUSTACE
(Honorary Secretary, Women Citizens' Associations, N.U.W.S.S.)

Coming Events.

Mrs. Fawcett has consented to speak at the Annual Meeting of the Proportional Representation Society, Thursday, July 18th, at the Conference Room, Central Hall, Westminster, at 5.30 p.m. Tickets are obtainable from the P.R. Society at 82, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

BRISTOL BABY WEEK.

JULY 8th.—Open Air Meeting on the Quay at Dinner Hour.

JULY 9th.—Open Air Meeting—Robertson Road, Eastville—Dinner Hour.

JULY 12th.—Colston Hall—Public Meeting—Speakers: Mrs. H. A. L. Fisher and others 7.30 p.m.

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WOMEN'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT SOCIETY.—Meeting, Wednesday, July 10th, at the Women's Institute, 92, Victoria-street, at 3 p.m. Chairman: Lady (Napier) Shaw; Mr. J. W. Dawes (Chief Technical Adviser, National Salvage Council) on "The Value and Utilisation of Waste Materials."—Office: 19, Tothill-street, Westminster.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB, 9, Grafton-street, Piccadilly, W.1.—Subscription: London Members £1 11s. 6d., Country Members £1 5s. per annum from date of entrance (Irish, Scottish, and Foreign Members 10s. 6d.). Weekly Lectures; House Dinners; Valuable Feminist Lending and Reference Library Free to Members; Excellent Catering; Luncheons and Dinners à la Carte.—All particulars, Secretary. Tel.: Mayfair 3932.

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[Continued on page 156.

Continued from page 155.]

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WANTED.

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